

I-5 – South King County Projects Update

Edition 26, March 1, 2005

In this issue: Construction Update / I-5 Ramp Closure / Pre-cast Bridge Deck Panels / Highway Advisory Radio Updates / Sign Up!

Construction Update

Crews have placed many of the pre-cast concrete panels that will make up the first layer of the [S. 317th bridge](#) deck (read more about this below). Each bridge girder was delivered and set on the bridge supports in two pieces, and crews are currently preparing to connect the girder pieces.

We're also still building the wall south of the median bridge support. This wall will support one of the new direct access ramps. Last week, we [poured concrete](#) for the wall to the left of the southbound exit to S. 320th. In preparation to shift that exit ramp to the right, we also did some [paving](#) in that area.

Crews are preparing for the next step of pavement rehabilitation (dowel bar retrofit) in the project area, and we've placed more pavement on the southbound I-5 lanes where we removed the old pavement last October.

The I-5 – S. 317th HOV Direct Access project is approximately 50% complete. Visit our Web site to see the [latest construction photos](#).

I-5 Ramp Closure

On Thursday night, March 3, the southbound exit to S. 320th will close at 10 p.m. The exit will reopen by 5 a.m. Friday, March 4. The closure is necessary as crews work on the portion of the new S. 317th bridge that is directly above the ramp. A signed detour will direct drivers to the next exit south (the Highway 18 exit, 142 A/B).

Pre-cast Bridge Deck Panels

WSDOT is always implementing new methods to maintain and build roads more efficiently. For example, to extend the life of existing I-5 pavement near S. 320th, we're using a relatively new method called dowel bar retrofit, which is more economical than completely replacing all the pavement. This method also minimizes inconvenience to drivers, because work is done during overnight lane closures. (See our [Dec. 14 update](#) to find out more about dowel bar retrofit).

When we build bridges, the standard construction method is to build forms on top of the bridge girders to hold the wet concrete, pour concrete into the forms, wait for the concrete to dry, and then remove the forms when the concrete is set. However, on the S. 317th bridge, we're using [pre-cast bridge deck panels](#).

The pre-cast panels are slabs of concrete that were fabricated off-site while we were building the bridge supports. We started [placing the panels](#) the same night we set the bridge girders (Feb. 10).

Once all the [panels](#) are in place, crews will bind the panels together with steel. Then we will pour the concrete driving surface on top of the steel layer.

Using pre-cast deck panels allows us to complete bridges more quickly than standard construction methods. In 2003, the use of pre-cast panels was a major factor in our speedy replacement of the NE 4th Street bridge, which spans the entire width of I-405 in Bellevue. We completely demolished and rebuilt this bridge in six months. We had to rebuild the NE 4th bridge to make room for the new HOV direct access ramps at NE 6th, which opened last December.

Highway Advisory Radio Updates

Tune your radio to **AM 1520** to hear a new project update each week on I-5 in Federal Way. Questions or comments? E-mail Laura Johnson at JohnsoL@wsdot.wa.gov.

Sign Up!

Did a friend or colleague send you this e-mail? To join our list, send an e-mail to JohnsoL@wsdot.wa.gov with "subscribe" in the subject line. You'll receive a subscription confirmation, and then you'll receive the I-5 – S. 317th Direct Access Project update directly each week.
